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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY,
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THE FOOD VALUE OF AMERICAN CHEESE.

Few people in this country eat cheese in sufficient quantities for it really to form an important part of the daily fare. Indeed, it is used more often simply as an appetizer or as a seasoning for some other food. Nearly every one relishes good American Cheddar or "store" cheese, but there is an impression that it is indigestible and constipating. Extensive digestion experiments carried on by the Department of Agriculture have demonstrated that more than 95 per cent of the protein of cheese is digested and 90 per cent of its energy is available. Even when eaten in large quantities and for long periods, no case of indigestion, constipation, or other disturbance was observed in those who ate it. One man who ate cheese as the chief source of both protein and energy, eating an average of 9.27 ounces daily, with bread and fruit, for more than two years, did a fair amount of muscular work and kept in good health.

American Cheddar cheese is a very satisfactory substitute for meat. It can be kept in storage for a long time, and contains much food in small volume.

The following tables show the value of cheese in comparison with some of the common meats:

One pound of American Cheddar cheese contains as much protein as—

- 1.57 pounds of sirloin steak.
- 1.35 pounds of round steak.
- 1.89 pounds of fowl.
- 1.79 pounds of smoked ham.
- 1.81 pounds of fresh ham.

In order to judge the value of foods fairly not only the protein but the energy also must be compared. To supply energy cheese is one of the best of food products. On the basis of energy supplied, 1 pound of cheese equals—

- 1.98 pounds of sirloin steak.
- 2.61 pounds of round steak.
- 2.52 pounds of fowl.
- 1.17 pounds of smoked ham.
- 1.29 pounds of fresh ham.

It will be seen from these tables that a pound of cheese supplies more than twice as much energy as a pound of fowl or round steak and almost twice as much protein as the same amount of fowl or ham. Cheese, therefore, is usually a cheaper food than the meats.

Cheese can also be combined in many palatable dishes. When grated it may be used in soups or with many vegetables. Other foods in which cheese is used are: Macaroni and cheese, Welsh rabbit, tomato rabbit, baked rice and cheese, baked crackers and cheese, vegetable and cheese rolls, cheese omelet, oatmeal and cheese, and cheese mush.

Recipes and further information are given in Farmers' Bulletin 487, "Cheese and Its Economical Uses in the Diet," which may be obtained free on application to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

